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OCTOBER 16, 1912

BEFORE THE

American Antiquarian Society

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF ITS

FOUNDATION



BY

CHARLES G. WASHBURN

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ADDRESS

WE are gathered here to-day, surrounded by the memorials and records of the past, to celebrate the centennial anniversary of this Society. The last survivor of the charter members died more than forty years ago, and yet through that wonderful art of photographing the thoughts and deeds of men upon the printed page, he and they, together with the others who have gone before, are a real and substantial part of this living company met

*“To celebrate a Century’s flight
And gather ere it disappears
The harvest of a hundred years.”*

While the Society was founded one hundred years ago, the activities of its distinguished patron and his associates extended over a period which began before the Revolution. Those who signed the petition for incorporation, in the order in which the names appear, were: Isaiah Thomas; Nathaniel Paine; Dr. William Paine, his elder brother; Levi Lincoln, Sr.; Aaron Bancroft; and Edward Bangs. Every detail of the fruitful life of Isaiah Thomas has been noticed in the proceedings from the time when, at the tender age of six years, he was bound as apprentice in 1755 to Zachariah Fowle, a printer, of Boston, until his death in Worcester in 1831 at the age of eighty-two.

Mr. Thomas was not only a printer and publisher, but a book-binder and paper-maker, and his business extended all over the country. He was,

too, a man of great public spirit, and his gifts to this community were numerous and substantial. Brissot de Warville, one of the leading spirits of the Girondists and a celebrated writer of his day, who visited this country in 1788, "not," he says, "to study antiques, or to search for unknown plants, but to study men who had just acquired their liberty," writes of Worcester: "This town is elegant and well-peopled; the printer, Isaiah Thomas, has rendered it famous through all the continent. He prints most of the works which appear; and it must be granted, that his editions are correct. Thomas is the Didot of the United States."

Nathaniel Paine, lawyer, graduated from Harvard College in 1775. He was, for a time, prosecuting attorney for the county, and represented Worcester in the legislature for three years. He was Judge of Probate for thirty-five years.

Dr. William Paine, his elder brother, graduated from Harvard College in 1768. One of his early instructors was John Adams, in 1775 teacher of the grammar school in Worcester, who writes in his diary: "The situation of the town is quite pleasant and the inhabitants, as far as I have had opportunity to know their character, are a sociable, generous and hospitable people; but the school is indeed a school of affliction, a large number of little runtlings, just capable of lisping A B C and troubling the master. But Dr. Savil tells me for my comfort 'by cultivating and pruning these tender plants in the garden of Worcester, I shall make some of them plants of

renown and cedars of Lebanon.' ” Upon his arrival from England, after the war broke out, Dr. Paine found himself denounced as a royalist and did not return to Worcester until 1792, where he lived until his death, highly respected as a citizen and a physician.

Levi Lincoln, lawyer, graduated from Harvard College in 1772; marched as a volunteer with the minute-men to Cambridge; was an active member of the committees of the Revolution, Clerk of Courts, Judge of Probate, delegate to the convention at Cambridge for framing a state constitution, member of the legislature, representative in Congress, Attorney-General of the United States and provisional Secretary of State in the Cabinet of Thomas Jefferson, lieutenant-governor and acting governor of this Commonwealth, and associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Such is a brief summary of his great career which terminated in 1820.

Aaron Bancroft, clergyman, historian, graduated from Harvard College in 1778, minister of the Second Parish in Worcester for more than fifty years, father of George Bancroft. In 1832 Dr. Bancroft sent to John Adams a volume of his sermons, in acknowledgment of which Mr. Adams wrote: “I thank you . . . for the gift of a precious volume. It is a chain of diamonds set with links of gold. I have never read nor heard read a volume of sermons better calculated and adapted to the age and country in which it was written. How different from

the sermons I heard and read in the town of Worcester from the year 1755 to 1758.”

Edward Bangs left Harvard College to participate in the Concord fight, graduated in 1777, read law in the office of Chief Justice Parsons, served as a volunteer in the suppression of Shays’s rebellion, was representative in the General Court, associate justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and an accomplished scholar in literature.

The petition to the Legislature for incorporation states of the Society that: “Its immediate and peculiar design is to discover the antiquities of our continent, and by providing a fixed and permanent place of deposit, to preserve such relics of American Antiquity as are portable, as well as to collect and preserve those of other parts of the globe. By the long and successful labors of the College of Antiquaries in Ireland (probably the most ancient institution now existing in the world), their historians have been enabled to trace the history of that country to an earlier period than that of any other nation in Europe.”

Mention is made in the ancient annals of an early society in Ireland, but the Society of Antiquaries of London, incorporated in 1753 and succeeding a similar society formed in 1572, is the premier society for the study of antiquities. In this country, the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia was founded in 1743; the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1780; the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1791.

The act of incorporation was signed by Governor

Caleb Strong on October 24, 1812. The incorporators were: Isaiah Thomas, Levi Lincoln, Harrison G. Otis, Timothy Bigelow, Nathaniel Paine, Edward Bangs, Esqrs.; John T. Kirkland, D.D.; Aaron Bancroft, D.D.; Jonathan H. Lyman, Elijah H. Mills, Elisha Hammond, Timothy Williams, William D. Peck, John Lowell, Edmund Dwight, Eleazer James, Josiah Quincy, William S. Shaw, Francis Blake, Levi Lincoln, Jr.; Samuel M. Burnside and Benjamin Russell, Esqrs.; Rev. Thaddeus M. Harris, Redford Webster, Thomas Walcut, Ebenezer T. Andrews, Isaiah Thomas, Jr.; William Wells. The amount of the annual income from real estate was limited to \$1500, and the personal estate was limited to the value of \$7000.

The first meeting of the Society was called for Thursday, November 19, 1812, at the Exchange Coffee House in Boston, where less than three months before Captain Isaac Hull had been banqueted because of the victory of the Constitution over the *Guerrière*. A committee was appointed to draw up regulations and by-laws, to report at the next meeting, at which the president, Isaiah Thomas, presented the Society with a large and valuable collection of books valued at \$4000. He was requested to retain possession of them until a place of deposit could be provided for their reception, and they were kept at his house on Court Hill for a period of eight years.

The by-laws provided for three meetings annually: one in Boston on December 22 and again on

the first Wednesday in June, and one in Worcester on the Wednesday next after the fourth Tuesday of September, and that an oration should be delivered at the December meeting; but later this was so far altered as to provide for holding the annual meeting on October 23, the day on which America was believed to have been discovered by Columbus.

Thus, as Mr. Haven, for so many years the accomplished librarian, once stated: "At the organization of this Society, the day upon which Columbus first set foot on the shores of the Western World was selected for the commemoration of its anniversaries, as the beginning of the civilized history of this continent, and the unsealing of its archaeological mysteries to the eyes of enlightened nations. The day was also chosen in honor of the great discoverer, to whose religious imagination the vessel that bore him was an ark of salvation, and himself (Columbus, the dove) a messenger of the Christian faith; not only Columbus, but Christopher—Christoferens, as he was wont to sign his name to public documents, with a fond conviction of its mystical meaning,—Christ-bearing, or the Christ-bearer,—divinely appointed and inspired for the fulfilment of prophecy." A desire to have the annual meeting held upon the actual date led to the ascertainment of the fact that Columbus made his discovery on the morning of the 29th day after the autumnal equinox, which now falls upon October 21.

The first meeting in Worcester was held "at the

dwelling of Col. Reuben Sikes, innholder, Sept. 29, 1813." This was Sikes's Coffee House, still standing on Main Street, and now known as Exchange Hotel. Both Washington and Lafayette have been entertained there, and it was for many years the home of visiting members of the bench and bar. On October 23, 1813, the Society celebrated at the Exchange Coffee House in Boston, the landing of Columbus, and after the business meeting marched to the Stone Chapel — King's Chapel — and listened to "an ingenious and learned address" by the Reverend Professor William Jenks of Bowdoin College.

The Boston meetings were held at the Exchange Coffee House until 1818, when it was destroyed by fire, in 1819 at Forster's Tavern, and in 1820 at the Marlborough Hotel. In 1821 the Society returned to the Exchange Coffee House, which had been rebuilt, and continued the meetings there for fifteen years. From May, 1836, to May, 1847, the Boston meetings were held at the Tremont House. Two Doric columns of granite from the portico of the Tremont House now stand in Institute Park near this building. From 1847 until April, 1900, when the Society met in Ellis Hall, the Boston meetings were held in the rooms of the American Academy.

Mr. Thomas provided, at his own expense, a building on Summer Street for the use of the Society, which was formally opened on Thursday, August 24, 1820. The members met at 10 o'clock in the morning, and marched at 11 o'clock to the North Meeting House on the adjoining lot, where the ser-

vices were opened with prayer by Dr. Bancroft. The address was delivered by Isaac Goodwin, Esq., then a resident of Sterling. He dwelt upon the importance of preserving the annals of the human race, and congratulated the citizens of the country upon the event of the day. After the services, a sumptuous repast, as it is recorded, was provided at Sikes's Coffee House. The building was enlarged by the erection of two wings in 1831; and while the Society enjoyed it as fully as if it had been its own, no deed ever passed from the donor. He died April 4, 1831. His will contained a bequest to the Society of \$30,000, and the following clause: "I give to said Society, (provided I shall not before my death execute a deed thereof,) and their successors forever, that tract of land in Worcester whereon is now erected a building for the use of said Society, which land is purchased of Samuel Chandler's heirs, containing about one acre near the Second Parish, with the said building thereon; which building is to be forever sacredly appropriated as long as said Society shall exist; for the library, cabinet, &c. of said Society; and the house and building are accordingly devised upon this express condition. And in case said Society shall at any time cease to use said building for said purpose, then the whole of this estate is to revert to my grandchildren generally and their heirs." Mr. Thomas, in his will, further declared that he valued this real estate at \$8000. He left to the Society \$10,000 in books from his private collection and \$12,000 in money, to make up the whole legacy of \$30,000.

It was found necessary, in 1850, to erect a new building, to provide necessary room and to escape the dampness of the original location. A lot of land, next north of the old Court House on Main Street, was generously given by Stephen Salisbury for this purpose. Later he added a subscription of \$5000 to the building fund. This building, with additions, was the home of the Society until the present building was occupied in 1911. In speaking of it once, Mr. Salisbury said: "It presented such a courageous contrast to the prevailing modern style of decorating buildings with a profusion of projections, that a storm of hasty criticism arose, which at first so disheartened some of the best friends of the Society, that they could only repeat Touchstone's apology for the choice of his wife: "An ill-favored thing, sir; but mine own." The old building and lot on Summer Street was sold to the trustees of the Worcester Academy. Before this could be done, however, the consent of the Thomas heirs had to be obtained, as the will had provided that, if the real estate should cease to be occupied for the purposes of the Society, it should revert to them. In commenting upon this, our late associate, Senator George Frisbie Hoar, once said: "I remember a very entertaining fact about that, which shows the habits and motives that affected ladies in the time when Dr. Hale and myself were young. I was a student in Judge Thomas's office at that time, or had just been, and had an office next door to his. He took great interest in the new hall, and in having this old

estate which his grandfather had given, quitclaimed to the Society. It required the assent of all the heirs ; otherwise we should forfeit the property. They got the assent of all the heirs but one lady, a cousin of the Judge, living in a neighboring town. She would not give hers. No offer of money and no persuasion could get her signature. At last the Judge was asked to take the matter in hand. He went to see her. If anybody then living could ' laugh on a lass with his bonny blue eye,' it was Ben Thomas. He came back exultant, and reported his success to the office. He said he had tried to persuade her, and spent the whole afternoon talking to her ; she said no, that her grandfather Thomas meant to have the property left in that way ; and she would not sign. He told her that all the other heirs had assented ; well, she didn't care about that ; he told her she could have almost any sum of money she would name. All was without avail. At last, just as he was going off, he said, ' My dear cousin, if you will sign that deed, you shall have the handsomest silk gown there is in Millbury ; ' and she signed it."

The Society began its existence in a period of wars, both abroad and at home. Europe, in 1812, was overshadowed by Napoleon. He had staked everything on the Continental System, and had united all Europe in the crusade against England. We had begun our war with England in June, three days after Wellington commenced the Salamanca campaign, and six days after Napoleon passed the Niemen on his way to Moscow — a campaign for

which he had been preparing since 1807. The Rev. George Allen, for many years minister in Shrewsbury, brother of Charles Allen so distinguished in this community in his day, was at that time a student in Yale College; and the expedition of Napoleon to Russia, as, I am informed, he told the story, was a subject of absorbing interest. One day he found a fellow student lying at full length on a barn floor studying the map of Europe. He was in a state of great excitement over Napoleon's progress into the heart of Russia. "He will be ruined! He will be ruined!" he cried. "He will be drawn into the interior of Russia, and the cold will do the rest; his army will be destroyed in the retreat." Napoleon's army, warned by the frost of its impending fate, began the retreat from Moscow five days before the date of incorporation of this Society.

When the news came of the overthrow of Napoleon, President Dwight read, at college prayers, the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, from the twelfth to the twenty-third verse. The twelfth verse runs as follows: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" And the twenty-second verse: "For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord."

The War of 1812—Mr. Madison's war, as it was called—was not popular in Massachusetts, but although every northern state excepting Pennsylvania

and Vermont voted for De Witt Clinton, Madison was elected for a second term.

In 1808, when the feeling in New England was so hostile to the embargo, but eight thousand spindles were employed in the spinning of cotton; in 1815 there were five hundred thousand. In 1814 Mr. Francis Lowell of Boston had set up at Waltham the first factory ever established in which every process, from cleaning and carding to weaving, was carried on under a single roof. It was never intended by the mother country that her New England colony should engage in manufacturing. The Earl of Chatham once said that the "colonists had no right to manufacture as much as a single horse-shoe nail."

That our people at that time had no idea that we would ever become a great manufacturing nation is evidenced by correspondence between Benjamin Franklin and John Adams in 1780, in which Franklin said: "America will not make manufactures enough for her own consumption this thousand years." And Adams replied: "The principal interest of America for many centuries to come will be landed and our chief occupation agriculture. Manufactures and commerce will be but secondary objects and always subservient to the other."

Also both abroad and at home there was a feeling of skepticism in regard to the introduction of mechanical improvements. At the beginning of the century the Academy of Science in France, when consulted by Napoleon as to the steamboat, spoke of it as a "mad idea, a gross error, an absurdity." When

Fulton's first steamboat made the trip from New York to Albany, on the 17th of August, 1807, it caused many preachers to curse the machine on the ground that seventeen was the total of the horns and the seven heads of the beast of the Apocalypse.

Returning to local conditions, the population of Worcester in 1810 was about twenty-five hundred, and it was not until 1820 that it became the largest of the towns in the county. For a long time the only stages from Worcester were six each week to Boston and six each week to New York.

Such, in a general way, were the conditions, foreign and domestic, at the time of the organization of this Society. Its nature and objects were very fully set forth by Mr. Thomas, reporting for a committee appointed for that purpose at the meeting held at the Exchange Coffee House in Boston on October 23, 1813, when he said that it appeared that one more Society for the promotion of literature, the useful and fine arts, and other valuable purposes might well be added to those already in existence, a society not confined to local purposes, nor intended for the particular advantage of any one state or section of the Union, one whose members might be found in every part of our western continent and its adjacent islands, and who are citizens of all parts of this quarter of the world. The intended objects of the Society were, in the words of Sir William Jones to the members of the Asiatic Society: "Man and Nature—whatever is, or has been performed by the one, or produced by the other," but were particularly the investigation of

American antiquities—natural, artificial, and literary. Individual members were appealed to, to collect books of every description, including pamphlets and magazines, particularly those printed in North and South America; newspapers, specimens and descriptions of fossils and handicrafts of the aborigines; manuscripts, ancient and modern, particularly those giving accounts of remarkable events, discoveries, or the description of any part of the continent, or the islands in the American seas, maps, charts, etc. A few of the subjects of especial interest to the American antiquary mentioned were the ancient Indian nations of our continent, the western mounds of earth, the early European settlements, and European accessions of population in America. Because of the danger from fire in large towns and cities and from the ravages of enemies to which seaports were so much exposed in time of war,—and one was then being waged,—it was agreed that an inland situation was to be preferred for the location of the library and museum, and so Worcester was selected, forty miles distant from the nearest arm of the sea on the great road from all the southern and western states to Boston, the capital of New England.

At this meeting a committee was appointed to adopt measures “for obtaining accurate surveys of all the ancient mounds, whether fortifications or otherwise, in the Western part of the United States, and for collecting on the spot, all the facts and information, which throw light on these interesting monuments of American Antiquity.” At the annual

meeting in 1819, it was stated that several communications had been made to the Society worthy of publication—among them being minute and accurate surveys of many of the ancient mounds and fortifications of the western country, by Caleb Atwater, Esq., of Ohio, done at the request and by the pecuniary assistance of the president, Isaiah Thomas. This led to the publication in 1820 of a volume of *Archaeology* containing an account of Mr. Atwater's researches among the ancient mounds, works of defence, and other remains in the west, illustrated by maps, plans, and drawings. The conclusions reached were that nothing discovered by the writer sustained the supposition that this region was once inhabited by a race of civilized men.

At the annual meeting in 1835, it was reported that a second volume of papers relating to the objects for which the institution was founded was in press, and that the largest contribution was from the pen of Hon. Albert Gallatin, who, for many years, had been engaged in investigating the aboriginal languages of the country. This volume contains "A Dissertation on Indian History and Languages," and Gookin's "History of the Praying Indians." Mr. Gallatin's contribution was devoted to a comprehensive comparison of dialects. The fuller title of the work is the "Synopsis of the Indian Tribes within the United States, east of the Rocky Mountains, and in the British and Russian Possessions in North America." The writing of this book and the

founding of the American Ethnological Society in 1842 earned for him the name of "Father of American Ethnology."

Albert Gallatin has a large place in our history. He was one of the founders of the Anti-Federalist party, elected to the Senate from Pennsylvania in 1793, leader of the Anti-Federalists in the House in 1795, Secretary of the Treasury for twelve years, in Jefferson's Cabinet and in that of Madison, Minister to France. It was then, in 1823, that, at the request of Alexander Von Humboldt,—elected a member of the Society in 1816,—he drew up a Memoir of the Indian languages which Humboldt proposed to annex to the second edition of his work on Mexico. Before Gallatin, Jefferson had collected and arranged the vocabularies of about fifty Indian languages and dialects, and so deserved a place among the forerunners of the modern American school of comparative philologists.

In 1850 the Society undertook the publication from the original manuscript of the early records of the Massachusetts Bay Company and Colony, with annotations by Mr. Haven, the librarian. This important work, so well begun, was continued under the auspices of the Commonwealth and under the editorial supervision of a member of the Society.

About this time the attention of the Council had been drawn to a field of antiquarian research where it was supposed that interesting and curious discoveries might be made. The State of Wisconsin and the neighboring sections of the country had

within their limits a peculiar class of mounds, differing essentially from those found elsewhere. These had been denominated animal mounds, because their outlines exhibited the forms of various animals. Birds, beasts, and fishes were imitated in the shapes of these elevations, sometimes on a scale of such magnitude that it was only in the process of surveying that the forms were developed. Specimens of these singular works had been drawn by United States engineers engaged in surveying those regions, and some of them had been shown in the publications of the Smithsonian Institution. But it was said that comparatively few of those known to exist had been explored and described, and that many more singular than those noticed remained to be delineated. It was supposed, also, that excavations, judiciously undertaken, would throw some light on the object of their erection, and would determine what relation they might bear, if any, to the earth-works of the valley of the Mississippi. The Council employed Mr. I. A. Lapham, of Milwaukee, experienced in topographical and other scientific surveys, for a tour of exploration among these mounds.

Since the organization of the Society, associations of a kindred nature had sprung up all over the country, devoted to archaeological research, and the field which was almost unoccupied at that time became full of workers. Private collections and amateur antiquaries had greatly increased in numbers. This was also true in Great Britain, where the British Archaeological Association was organized in 1843 to

include such archaeologists as could not be provided for in the older society of antiquaries. In Ireland the Irish Archaeological Society was founded in 1840; the revival of the study spread through the country, and many societies were organized. Among the causes which it was said led to this revival was the Romantic Movement in literature towards the end of the eighteenth century. Its great inspiring spirit was Walter Scott, whose "Border Minstrelsy" and other works cast a glamour over past times. We have all delighted in the pages of "The Antiquary," in the character of Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck and his antiquarian pursuits, whose vagaries Scott holds up to gentle ridicule as tending to bring serious antiquarian research into disrepute.

The wanton neglect of the memorials of earlier times has often been commented upon. It is related that several pictures of Correggio were used at Stockholm to stop the broken windows of the royal stables, and that a portrait of one of the most illustrious of the fathers of New England, now in one of our American colleges, was once employed for a similar purpose. Indeed, it is unhappily true that the destruction of ancient monuments is more largely due to the vandalism of man than to the ravages of time. I was interested, some years ago, when in the Nile valley, to observe that the obelisks were quarried from a coarse grained pink granite, so coarse, indeed, that it chipped readily. It was easy to see that such a stone might endure for ages in a climate like that of Egypt, but exposed to the rude

assaults of this latitude would quickly disintegrate, unless artificially protected. The climate of Egypt is perfect for preserving her ancient monuments. I remember visiting the tomb of Ti, where the pigments seemed as fresh as when they were applied to the interior decoration of the tomb four thousand years ago. One could clearly see where the artist had made his sketch and had not followed with the color, for what reason will probably forever remain a mystery.

This tomb was underground, in the sand, and absolutely protected from the dampness; and of frost there was none. It is no doubt true that the Parthenon would be as perfect to-day as it was in the time of Phidias if the hand of the spoiler could have been stayed, and the Elgin Marbles would no doubt endure as long under the sunny Grecian skies as they will among the treasures of the British Museum. The Colosseum in Rome could easily have resisted the elements of nature, but could not escape the cupidity of men. Upon the general subject of antiquarian research, it has been said in our proceedings that, whoever is sufficiently thoughtful to preserve these footprints of passing occurrences which are apt to be lightly regarded until they are lost, and which, at every tide in the affairs of men, are swept into oblivion, may be sure of the gratitude of posterity. Knowledge of industrial arts and the customs of domestic and social life, in periods no more remote than the Middle Ages, is not derived from dignified documents or elaborate literature,

but is gathered from verbal and pictorial representations of the humblest pretensions, or picked out of pieces of tapestry, or the ornaments of illuminated manuscripts, otherwise of little value.

Not only has the discovery of ancient manuscripts made possible the making of history extending to very ancient times, but the quest often becomes of romantic interest. This cannot be better illustrated than in the discovery by Tischendorf of the Sinaitic manuscript in the Convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mt. Sinai. As he tells the story, when he visited the library of the monastery in 1844, he saw in the middle of the great hall a large basket full of old parchments, and the librarian told him that two heaps of papers like them had already been committed to the flames. Finding among them a considerable number of sheets of a copy of the Old Testament in Greek more ancient than he had ever seen before, he possessed himself of forty-three which were destined for the fire, and made an unsuccessful attempt to secure the remainder. So determined was he to possess them that he returned to the convent nine years later, convinced from a fragment containing eleven short lines of Genesis that the manuscript originally included the entire Old Testament, but he was unsuccessful in finding further traces of the manuscript of 1844. He returned again to the convent in 1859, when, almost by accident, he discovered in the cell of the steward, not only the fragments which fifteen years before he had taken out of the basket, but also other parts of the Old

Testament, the New Testament complete, and, in addition, the Epistle of Barnabas and a part of the Pastor of Hermas. He knew that he held in his hand the most precious Biblical treasure in existence. For two centuries search had been made in vain for the first part of the original Greek of the Epistle of Barnabas. He was permitted to carry the Sinaitic Bible to St. Petersburg to be copied, and later Oxford and Cambridge conferred upon him their highest academic degree. "I would rather," said the old man, — "I would rather have discovered this Sinaitic manuscript than the Koh-i-Noor of the Queen of England." Contributions of this sort, of greater or less importance, are constantly being made through the labors of investigators. Within the present year, Professor Scheil, of Paris, the eminent Assyriologist, has discovered a cuneiform tablet which establishes the order and names of five dynasties earlier than 2300 B.C.

A subject to which much space is given in the proceedings is that of the origin of our population. Attention is drawn to the fact that the theories upon this subject had fallen somewhat into disrepute because of the absurdities of those who tried to prove too much and who warped and colored facts to suit their needs, and that the aboriginal remains at the west had often been misconceived and misrepresented in the endeavor to account for them upon the supposition that they were the work of an offshoot from some European or Asiatic nation more or less civilized. One hypothesis, elaborately argued and

tenaciously clung to, was that the lost tribes of Israel had found refuge in America. The question was regarded as an open one until after the middle of the century, fertile in the elements of controversy, and one which was commended to the Society for serious consideration. It was suggested that the facilities of access from Asia are certainly greater than those from Europe, and that the same winds that bore the Japanese junk to the neighborhood of the Columbia River could have carried thither the fleet of Kublai Khan, described by Marco Polo as having disappeared in a mysterious manner on a voyage of conquest against Japan and believed by many writers to have been driven to this continent. In the eighteenth century some French philosophers suggested the idea that the aborigines of this continent were possibly the primitive race of mankind. Our speculative statesman, Thomas Jefferson, was disposed to adopt this opinion, on the ground that so many distinct vocabularies existed among the natives, while among the Asiatic tribes having a similar grammatical regimen, no such extreme diversity was found.

Mr. Haven, for so many years the accomplished librarian of the Society, issued in the early fifties, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, an elaborate paper upon the Archaeology of the United States, with opinions respecting vestiges of antiquity. It is no doubt due to his profound interest in this subject that the attention of the Society was so pointedly directed to it. He had been for many years of the opinion that the prehistoric forms of civil-

ization on this continent were purely of native origin. At about this time, under the auspices of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Charles Deane edited the long lost manuscript journal of William Bradford, Governor of the Plymouth Colony, the original of which was later to be returned to Massachusetts through the efforts of another of our members.

At the annual meeting on October 21, 1862, reference was made to the close of the half-century of the life of the Society, but the commemoration of the event was deferred, as the report says, to "happier and more peaceful times." "We are too much absorbed in the thoughts and cares and anxieties of the present and near future for a patient retouching of the monuments of the past. The click of the hammer and of the chisel are lost in the din of arms. Old Mortality himself would be startled from his labor of love by the cry of an afflicted country."

At the annual meeting in 1863, the address upon the half-century commemoration was prepared by Dr. William Jenks, D.D., who delivered the address just fifty years before, in 1813, and was one of the four survivors of the original members; the other three being Governor Levi Lincoln, Josiah Quincy, and Dr. John Green.

In 1866 the Society was associated with the establishment by George Peabody of a museum and professorship of archaeology and ethnology in connection with Harvard College by the appointment of Stephen Salisbury as one of the trustees, his successors to be the future presidents of the

Society. This endowment was said to be "the first instance in this country of the establishment of an independent provision for the promotion of investigation in an important branch of the study of history."

The year 1868 is notable as that of the death of Hon. Levi Lincoln, the last survivor of the charter members. He graduated from Harvard College in 1802; was a member of the state senate; and in 1814 of the House of Representatives, in which he prepared and offered the protest of the minority against the act authorizing the Hartford Convention; was a member of the convention of 1820 to revise the state constitution, and one of the commissioners under the act for the separation of Maine, to make partition and apportionment of the public property; speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, lieutenant-governor, associate justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, governor of the Commonwealth, member of Congress, councillor of this Society.

Although the subject has been referred to in a general way, the first direct reference I have found in the proceedings to "Darwinism" by name was in 1868. This seems rather strange in view of the fact that the "Origin of Species" was published in 1859. Darwin had begun his journal as early as July, 1837. His faith was then shaken in the fixity of species. He made an abstract of his facts in 1844, and showed it to his friend, Sir Joseph Hooker, the botanist, who, with Sir Charles Lyell, the geologist,

knew of his labors. Alfred Russel Wallace, a celebrated naturalist at work in the East Indian archipelago, reached independently the same conclusion as to natural selection. Their joint production, together with a full statement of the facts, was presented to the Linnaean Society of London, July 1, 1858. Darwin said that if he could convince Lyell, Hooker, and Huxley, he could wait for the rest. This subject was under discussion at the annual meeting in 1868, when Dr. Ellis said that he had removed from his shelves five volumes of Sir Charles Lyell's geology because Lyell had abandoned his "principles" and asserted his new system with equal assurance.

The variety of subjects considered at the meetings may be interestingly illustrated by turning to that discussed at the annual meeting in 1871, when Charles Sumner, in commenting upon the report of the Council, suggesting the idea that the Pacific would be our Mediterranean Sea, said that the unity of European capital renders it doubtful if the United States ever regains its power on the Atlantic Ocean, and it must improve its opportunity in the other direction. The Pacific is essentially ours, and it is of vast importance that all our rights there be jealously guarded and defended. In this connection, he said that he anticipated a time when the Sandwich Islands would become a part of the jurisdiction of this country, as our half-way house to China and Japan. In this view, the Pacific, he continued, is to be to us the great middle sea of the world. He spoke also of the

high degree of intelligence of the Japanese, and the ease and industry with which they apply themselves to the acquisition of knowledge, and of the great importance of developing fully our international relations with that people.

Our members have always had a prominent part in the administration of the affairs of the state and nation, and through them the Society has been closely identified with the political history of the country. Isaiah Thomas was twenty-one years old at the time of the Boston massacre, which has been designated as "the first act in the drama of the American Revolution," and his influential part in that great event need not be repeated here. In the War of 1812 the influence of some of our members was hostile to the policy of the government. Josiah Quincy was the leader of the Federalist party in Massachusetts, and vigorous in his denunciation of the war. Webster, too, opposed it, but more temperately. Perhaps as striking an instance as any of the influence of a member of the Society upon the political movements of his time is that of Charles Allen, who was chosen a delegate from the Worcester district to the Whig national convention of 1848. It was there that he said: "The Whig party is here and this day dissolved." At the meeting called in Worcester upon his return, his brother, the Rev. George Allen, presented a resolution which was not only adopted there, but at nearly every other Free Soil meeting held that year in Massachusetts, and became a battle-cry throughout the country: "*Re-*

solved, That Massachusetts wears no chains, and spurns all bribes. That she goes now and will ever go for Free Soil and Free Men, for Free Lips and a Free Press, for a Free Land and a Free World.”

The Society owes much to the services of its librarians. Isaiah Thomas had charge of the library and cabinet until the October meeting in 1814, when Samuel Jennison was chosen, and served until 1826. Mr. Jennison, while not college bred, was a learned man and an able writer. He was a member of many literary and historical societies and a large collector of biographical material, much of which is in the possession of the Society. He was succeeded by William Lincoln, a son of the first Levi Lincoln. He graduated from Harvard College in 1822, and practised law in Worcester, was associated with Christopher C. Baldwin in publishing the “Worcester Magazine and Historical Journal,” was editor of the “National Aegis,” and under appointment from Governor Edward Everett, edited the journals of the Provincial Congress, committees of safety, and county conventions for the years 1774 and 1775. His most important work was the history of Worcester from its first settlement in 1664 to 1836. Christopher C. Baldwin, succeeding Mr. Lincoln, became acting librarian at the October meeting in 1827, having been elected a member at the same time, together with Charles Allen, Emory Washburn, and Jared Sparks. In May, 1830, Mr. Baldwin moved his law office to Barre. He said that there were too many lawyers in Worcester, being above twenty, either

to make the profession profitable or reputable; that he only made \$500 a year, and that the business was growing less. "Many," said he, "go out a-maying and more to see the girls." He moved from Barre to Sutton, but returning to Worcester, again became librarian, April 1, 1832, and held the office until his death in August, 1835. During his absence the office was filled by Samuel M. Burnside, Esq. The Society is indebted to Mr. Baldwin for many of its rare publications, and particularly for its large and valuable collection of American newspapers. He had a strong taste for the pursuits of the antiquary and genealogist. In writing to the Rev. Aaron Bancroft in 1832, then on a visit to Cincinnati, he asked him to interest himself in the mounds in the Ohio Valley, and to procure, if he could, a collection of the "skulls of the unknown, forgotten people who built the mounds and forts and inhabited the country before the present race of Indians."

In 1834 he sought to secure from Temple Cutler, son of Manasseh Cutler, the records and papers of the Ohio Company, and wrote: "Their preservation will identify the name and memory of your father with the original formation of one of the most powerful states of the Union." He had decided views as to the library, and on one occasion said: "There were very few objects of curiosity or antiquity in the collection. This is correct taste. A library should contain nothing but books, coins, statuary and pictures. I admit now and then an antiquity should be admitted. But how absurd to

pile up old bureaus and chests, and stuff them with old coats and hats and high-heeled shoes! The true history of all these things is handed down by painting. And besides, if they are once received, there will be attempts making to gull somebody with the 'Shield of Achilles' or 'Mambrino's helmet.' I have discouraged the sending them to the Antiquarian hall for this reason."

Mr. Baldwin did not confine his labors to the library, but took great interest in the grounds as well. With his own hands he set out hundreds of trees about the old building on Summer Street, most of which he dug in the woods and carried to their destination upon his back. "They will," said he, "afford a comfortable shade for my successor, if I should not live to enjoy it myself." In the work of beautifying the grounds he had some assistance. On one occasion he writes: "Yesterday, His Excellency Governor Lincoln came with several men to lay the grounds in front of the Antiquarian Hall. He worked very diligently two days and made some very acceptable alterations. The thermometer stood at 91°, and, judging from the profuse perspiration upon His Excellency's forehead, I have no question but that he had a very warm time of it."

Through Mr. Baldwin's diary we get an acquaintance with the domestic affairs of the Society. On one occasion he writes: "Isaiah Thomas, LL.D., calls at my office, above 80 and yet healthy and vigorous;" and on another: "Assist Isaiah Thomas, LL.D., president of the A. A. S., in mak-

ing an account of books given to the Society within the year." The meetings of the Council were then held on the last Wednesday of each month. Mr. Baldwin mildly complains that while the meetings are very pleasant, "the Council spends too much time in talking about politics."

On the last day of 1834 he sent the following note to "Sam Jennison, Esq. If not at the Bank, at his new seat in Pearl street."

MY DEAR SIR :

One of my spokes is so out of kilter that I have requested the company of the council at my room at my boarding house, this evening at 7 o'clock, where I shall be very happy to see you. I have not ventured out of doors since Saturday, and I did not feel up to breaking snow paths to-day.

Your decrepid friend,

KIT, THE ANTIQUARY.

Last day of 1834.

In attending the May meeting in Boston, in 1835, he took the stage to Westborough and thence by railroad to Boston. He writes: "We were all invited to dine with Mr. Winthrop, president of the Society. The Society always dine with him, and he gives a prime entertainment."

Mr. Baldwin died August 20, 1835, as the result of an accident in the upsetting of a stage near Norwich, Ohio. On October 23 of that year William Lincoln, his close personal friend, delivered an address upon his character and services before the So-

ciety in the Unitarian meeting-house, which stood then, as the building which replaced it now stands, south of the Court House.

Mr. Baldwin was succeeded by Maturin L. Fisher, acting librarian for two years, who then moved to Iowa. Samuel F. Haven was elected in October, 1837, and entered upon his duties in April of the following year. He was elected to membership at the October meeting. He continued in this office until April, 1881, when he resigned, and during this period of forty-three years his reports form a most important part of the proceedings. The first report, made in October, 1838, contains the statement that, "on commencing his duties, the present librarian found himself in the midst of a library almost overflowing with the results of the diligence of his predecessor and of public and private liberalities."

Commenting upon the work of the Society, he said: "Our society may not itself engage in the composition of History or Genealogy, in the technical sense of these pursuits, but it is called upon to furnish means and facilities for its accomplishment by others. This it may fairly be claimed it has been doing, if quietly and economically, yet in a diligent and liberal way, after the example set by its founder. In two departments of collection — those of Newspapers and Pamphlets — Dr. Thomas took the precedence in this country. Such fugitive productions were hardly thought worthy of preservation in public libraries before his time. They are troublesome to handle and expensive to prepare for

permanent keeping. But for the binding fund provided by our present president they would be an unmanageable burden. As it is, they are among the choicest of our treasures.”

And on another occasion: “Its proper office is to keep the fire ever burning upon its altar, from which a torch may be kindled for every particular enterprise, and by which light may be shed over every field of investigation—to cherish the spirit of research by precept and example, and to bestow upon every honest effort the most candid and liberal consideration.”

On another occasion he said: “Antiquity is just now in fashion, and both associated and individual collectors of memorials of the past are multiplying everywhere. As archaeology has become one of the most popular of the sciences, the term archaeological or its equivalent is often added to the name and style of societies organized for very different purposes. The word Antiquary is losing its curiosity-shop associations, and is gaining the prestige of signifying a scientific student of the origin and primitive history of the human race. When will the word Antiquarian, used as a noun, be abolished? It has the sanction of Gibbon, the historian, but scholars should be more exact in their use of the terms. When the late Mr. Crabb Robinson and a lady were once riding in the same carriage, the lady chanced to say: ‘Oh, Mr. Robinson, you are an antiquarian.’ ‘Madam,’ he replied, gravely, ‘I am a noun and not an adjective. An antiquary, if you please.’”

The large variety of subjects which Mr. Haven treated in his reports have been briefly summarized by one of our associates as follows: "American Archaeology and Exploration; Mexican Antiquities; Mound-Builders; Dighton Rock; the Antehistoric Period of the Old World; Lake Dwellings; the Stone Age and Flint Implements; the Improved Method of Cataloguing; Tribute to Humboldt; Account of the Founder of the Society, his services during the Revolution, as printer, as historian of printing and as collector; the Characters and Writings of the Mathers; the Brinley Library; Dr. Bentley's Papers; Broad-sides; the Literature of the Civil War; Examination of the Popham Colony; Our Early Magazine Literature; and Lost Historical Papers."

Mr. Haven was succeeded by Mr. Edmund M. Barton, now librarian emeritus, of whose devotion to the interests of the Society through his many years of faithful service we all have personal knowledge, and for whom we wish a serene and happy old age.

While the membership of the Society is national and international, it has been deeply influenced in its activities by the local members. In the report of the Council in 1849, Mr. Haven said: "It is clear that the efficiency of an Institution must greatly depend upon its local strength. If the central machinery is wanting in power, the motion of the distant wheels will be feeble and irregular."

Mention has already been made of the men who organized the Society, and the list is a distinguished one. Until his death in 1831, Isaiah Thomas was the

dominating force, in large part paying its expenses. He was succeeded in the presidency by Thomas Lindell Winthrop, a graduate of Harvard, state senator, lieutenant-governor, member of many learned societies, of whose relations to this Society Dr. Jenks said he "was ever punctually and faithfully devoted to its interests even to the close of life." Following him was the gifted Everett, clergyman, member of Congress, governor, Minister to the Court of St. James, president of Harvard College, Secretary of State, successor to John Davis in the Senate of the United States, statesman, orator, scholar. He, in turn, was succeeded by John Davis, graduate of Yale in the class of 1812, lawyer, member of Congress, governor, United States Senator.

Stephen Salisbury was president from 1854 until his death in 1884, and up to that time, by general consent, was accorded a place second only to that of Mr. Thomas in the value of his services and amount of his benefactions. Mr. Salisbury occupied a distinguished place in this community. He was not only a man of education, social prominence, and large affairs, but an excellent classical scholar. His frequent participation in the proceedings is marked by sound sense and sound learning.

The Rev. Edward Everett Hale, then a resident of Worcester, was elected to the Society in 1847, and from that time until his death, a period of upwards of sixty years, was a constant contributor to the proceedings, and for a short time served as president. His informal contributions had a peculiar

charm. Characteristic of these was the following, made several years ago: "When the great fire took place and swept away the most of commercial Boston, our friends at the Old South meeting-house had a valuable piece of property, and they sold it for \$400,000, and that \$400,000 had to be raised some way, and we were all very enthusiastic in our wishes to preserve the old meeting-house. I met Henry Longfellow in the street one day, and I said: 'Longfellow, you have got to help in preserving the meeting-house.' He said: 'All right, how much do you want?' I said: 'How much? I want you to write us a poem.' He was very good natured about it, and said: 'If the spirit moves, I will write the poem.' I was not quite satisfied with that. I said: 'The spirit must move, it has got to move, and I hope it will move.' And we parted. That week Longfellow wrote his ballad on the French fleet, and according to me, it is the best American ballad written. It is ascribed to Thomas Prince, the minister of the Old South."

Senator Hoar was elected to membership in 1853, and was a constant contributor to the proceedings, and president for a time. I think that perhaps as good an illustration as any of his fondness for the pursuits of the antiquary is to be found in the return of the Bradford manuscript to this Commonwealth in 1897, by the Bishop of London. Said the bishop to Mr. Hoar: "I did not know you cared anything about it." "Why," said Mr. Hoar, in reply, "if there were in existence in England a history of King Alfred's reign for thirty years, written by his own

hand, it would not be more precious in the eyes of Englishmen than this manuscript is to us.”

Stephen Salisbury, Jr., was for years an active and highly useful member of the Society. He was deeply interested in the literature of Central America, and the results, direct and indirect, of his visits to Yucatan are to be found in the proceedings. He was president from 1887 until his death in 1905. The gifts to the Society of the father were exceeded only by those of the son.

It so happens that the oldest of our associates in membership and the oldest in years are both residents of Worcester :

Nathaniel Paine, born in 1834, bearing the honored name of a charter member, elected to membership in 1860, treasurer for forty-five years, member of the Council since 1863, a frequent contributor to the proceedings, recipient of an honorary degree from Harvard University in recognition of his accomplishments as an antiquary.

William Addison Smith, born in 1824, while John Adams and Thomas Jefferson still lived, graduated from Harvard College in 1843, associated with the Society since 1867, of which may be said, as was once said of the British Scientific Association, that membership seems to bring with it an assurance of long life.

In his address in King's Chapel in October, 1814, Dr. Abiel Holmes said: “Antiquity, far from being a rival, is but a handmaid of history. Her office is more humble, her province more restricted. The

one furnishes a few of the valuable materials with which the other constructs her superb edifice."

At the moment, I can think of no better illustration of the functions of the antiquary and the historian than is to be found in William Hickling Prescott, an early member, whose attainments in the former field are excelled only by those in the latter. In writing the "Conquest of Mexico," he tells us of the rich store of new material which he found in the Royal Academy of History at Madrid, consisting of instructions of the court, military and private journals, correspondence of the great actors in the scenes, legal instruments, contemporary chronicles, and the like, drawn from all the principal places in the extensive colonial empire of Spain, as well as from the public archives in the peninsula; and in the preparation of "Philip the Second" he sought his materials in the public archives in the great European capitals and in private collections, in which work he was aided by Edward Everett. The easy access to these treasures is in happy contrast with the exclusiveness of the Fan family in China at that time, whose library contained upwards of fifty thousand volumes, of whom it was said that each member of the family had a key to his own lock, so that the library could be opened only by the consent of all and in the presence of all.

The immediate and peculiar design of this Society has been declared to be to discover the antiquities of our continent, but the broader purpose is a desire to contribute to the advancement of the arts

and sciences, as well as to assist the researches of future historians. In these fields of research and discovery there has been an enormous development during the past one hundred years. In 1800 about one-fifth of the earth's land surface was known: at the present time less than one-tenth is unexplored; and with the discovery of the North and South Poles, the latter within the present year, practically the entire surface of the earth is now known to us. Until almost the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was the general belief that man and the whole universe began to exist several thousand years ago; that everything was created out of hand, and has remained unchanged ever since. The words: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and the date 4004 B.C. as the starting-point, were accepted literally.

The fundamental idea of geology, as it has come to be understood, is the evolution of the earth through millions of years. We can no longer speak with scientific precision of the "everlasting hills;" we know that nothing is permanent; that everything is subject to continuous change, nothing is at rest. Indeed, it is said that in every stick and stone the particles which compose the atoms flash through over a hundred thousand miles a second. The modern science of geology enables us to fix the remote time of the birth of the mountains, to trace their development and decay through the ages, and to find their remains in the folded structure of the rocks. As Lamarck, the celebrated French naturalist, once

said: "For Nature, time is nothing. It is never a difficulty, she always has it at her disposal; and it is for her the means by which she has accomplished the greatest as well as the least results. For all the evolution of the earth and of living beings, Nature needs but three elements—space, time, and matter."

After the great antiquity of the earth and its origin and development by natural processes had been generally accepted, man was believed to have appeared only a few thousand years ago, and it was comparatively recently—little more than fifty years ago, as has been said—that Darwin's "Origin of Species" prepared the way for the now generally accepted theory of man's origin by a natural process of evolution.

Astronomy, the oldest of sciences, comprehending all matter of the universe which lies outside of the earth's atmosphere, has made great advances during the century; a science cultivated eight thousand years ago in the valley of the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates, it has, through the aid of recent discoveries in physics and chemistry and celestial photography, bridged the distances of space. The discovery and development of spectrum analysis during the nineteenth century has enlarged enormously the opportunities for celestial inquiry, and put us upon terms of intimacy with our sister planets of the solar system.

Bacteriology has revolutionized our views of fermentation, and marks the pathway of our physicians and surgeons, and our sanitary engineers. In

physics the nineteenth century has witnessed the greatest advance since the time of Galileo and Newton. The eclipses of Jupiter's moons and observations upon the positions of the stars as influenced by the motion of the earth in its orbit have furnished a measure for the velocity of light. Biology has demonstrated that plants and animals are built up of cells, or of minute elementary organisms and micro-organisms, which are recognized as the cause of widely distributed processes of putrefaction, of fermentation, and of the diseases of plants and animals. The less men knew, the more ready they were to accept the hypothesis of spontaneous generation. Pasteur proved by scientific methods that, for microbes, too, the saying is fulfilled: *Omni vivum e vivo*—life comes only from life.

It is well within the truth to say that in therapeutics, medical and surgical, physiology, pathology, and hygiene, greater progress has been made during the last century than during the previous two thousand years. The discovery of the effect of vaccination, of general anaesthetics, the adoption of antiseptic and aseptic methods in surgery, the development of modern bacteriology, and the demonstration that some diseases are due to the growth of micro-organisms are enough to justify the assertion.

What, then, I ask, is the function of this Society in this wonderful age? It is, as it always has been, to discover the truth in whatever field we may investigate, and to make it available for use by our fellow-men; to preserve correct records of facts upon

which future chroniclers may base their conclusions.

“Science seems to me,” said Huxley, “to teach, in the highest and strongest manner, the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before the fact as a little child; be prepared to give up every preconceived notion; follow humbly wherever and to whatsoever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind,” he said, “since I have resolved at all risks to do this.” He tells us that he has subordinated ambition for scientific fame to the diffusion among men of that enthusiasm for truth, that fanaticism of veracity, which is a greater possession than much learning, a nobler gift than the power of increasing knowledge. Ours should be the spirit of the dervish in the Arabian tale, who “did not hesitate to abandon to his comrade the camels with their load of jewels and gold while he retained the casket of that mysterious juice, which enabled him to behold at one glance all the hidden riches of the universe. Surely it is no exaggeration to say that no external advantage is to be compared with that purification of the intellectual eye, which gives us to contemplate the infinite wealth of the mental world; all the hoarded treasures of the primeval dynasties, all the shapeless ore of its yet unexplored mines.”







WERT
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